

REPORT

ON

NATIVE PAPERS

FOR THE

Week ending the 21st February 1891.

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LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.
BENGALI.				
<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
1	"Ahammadi" ...	Tangail, Mymensingh	450	12th February 1891.
2	"Hitakari" ...	Kushtea ...	30	11th ditto.
3	"Kasipore Nibasi" ...	Kasipore, Burrisal ...	.....	2nd fortnight of Magh, 1297 B. S.
4	"Navamihir" ...	Ghatail, Mymensingh	.....	
5	"Sahayogi" ...	Burrisal ...	.....	
6	"Uluberia Darpan" ...	Uluberia ...	.....	12th February 1891.
<i>Weekly.</i>				
7	"Bangavasi" ...	Calcutta ...	20,000	14th ditto.
8	"Banganibasi" ...	Ditto ...	.....	13th ditto.
9	"Burdwan Sanjivani" ...	Burdwan ...	302	10th ditto.
10	"Charuvarta" ...	Sherepore, Mymensingh	500	9th ditto.
11	"Dacca Prakash" ...	Dacca ...	1,200	15th ditto.
12	"Education Gazette" ...	Hooghly ...	885	13th ditto.
13	"Gramvasi" ...	Ramkristopore, Howrah	800	16th ditto.
14	"Hindu Ranjika" ...	Beauleah, Rajshahye...	300	
15	"Murshidabad Pratinidhi" ...	Berhampore ...	.....	
16	"Navayuga" ...	Calcutta ...	.....	
17	"Pratikar" ...	Berhampore ...	600	13th ditto.
18	"Rungpore Dikprakash" ...	Kakinia, Rungpore ...	.....	12th ditto.
19	"Sahachar" ...	Calcutta ...	500	11th ditto.
20	"Sakti" ...	Dacca ...	.....	10th ditto.
21	"Samaj-o-Sahitya" ...	Garibpore, Nuddea ...	.....	
22	"Samaya" ...	Calcutta ...	3,806	8th and 15th February 1891.
23	"Sanjivani" ...	Ditto ...	4,000	14th February 1891.
24	"Sansodhini" ...	Chittagong ...	.....	
25	"Sarawat Patra" ...	Dacca ...	300	15th ditto.
26	"Som Prakash" ...	Calcutta ...	1,000	16th ditto.
27	"Sudhakar" ...	Ditto ...	2,580	13th ditto.
28	"Sulabh Samachar" ...	Ditto ...	.....	14th ditto.
29	"Surabhi-o-Pataká" ...	Ditto ...	700	13th ditto.
<i>Daily.</i>				
30	"Banga Vidyá Prakashika" ...	Calcutta ...	500	7th, 9th 10th and 16th February 1891.
31	"Bengal Exchange Gazette" ...	Ditto ...	.....	14th, 16th, 17th and 19th February 1891.
32	"Dainik o Samachar Chandrika" ...	Ditto ...	1,500	15th to 19th February 1891.
33	"Samvad Prabhakar" ...	Ditto ...	800	16th to 19th ditto.
34	"Samvad Purnachandrodaya" ...	Ditto ...	300	13th, 14th and 16th to 19th February 1891.

No.	Names of newspapers.	Place of publication	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.
ENGLISH AND BENGALI.				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
35	"Dacca Gazette"	Dacca ...	.....	9th to 16th February 1891.
HINDI.				
<i>Monthly.</i>				
36	"Darjeeling Mission ke Másik Samáchar Patrika."	Darjeeling ...	20	
37	"Kshatriya Patriká"	Patna ...	200	
<i>Weekly.</i>				
38	"Aryávarta"	Calcutta ...	800	14th February 1891.
39	"Behar Bandhu"	Bankipore ...	.....	5th and 12th February 1891.
40	"Bhárat Mitra"	Calcutta ...	1,653	12th February 1891.
41	"Champarun Chandrika"	Bettiah ...	.....	
42	"Desí Vyápári"	Calcutta ...	.....	
43	"Hindi Bangabási"	Ditto ...	.....	9th ditto.
44	"Sár Sudhánidhi"	Ditto ...	500	
45	"Uchit Baktá"	Ditto ...	4,500	
PERSIAN.				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
46	"Jáum-Jahánomah"	Calcutta ...	250	
URDU.				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
47	"Aftal Alum Arrah"	Arrah ...	300	
48	"Al Punch"	Bankipore ...	.....	9th and 16th February 1891.
49	"Anis"	Patna ...	.....	
50	"Calcutta Punch"	Calcutta ...	.....	
51	"Gauhur"	Ditto ...	196	
52	"Raisul-Akhbari-Moorshidabad"	Murshidabad ...	.....	8th February 1891.
53	"Urdu Guide and Darussaltanat"	Calcutta ...	340	13th ditto.
URIYA.				
<i>Monthly.</i>				
54	"Asha"	Cuttack ...	.....	
55	"Pradíp"	Ditto ...	.....	
56	"Samyabadi"	Ditto ...	.....	
57	"Taraka and Subhavártá"	Ditto ...	.....	
<i>Weekly.</i>				
58	"Dipaka"	Cuttack ...	.....	
59	"Samvad Váhika"	Balasore ...	205	29th Jannary, and 5th February 1891.
60	"Urya and Navasamvád"	Ditto ...	600	28th ditto 4th ditto.
61	"Utkal Dípiká"	Cuttack ...	444	31st ditto 7th ditto.
PAPERS PUBLISHED IN ASSAM.				
BENGALI.				
<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
62	"Paridarshak"	Sylhet ...	450	9th February 1891.
63	"Silchar"	Silchar ...	500	
<i>Weekly.</i>				
64	"Srihatta Mihir"	Sylhet ...	.....	9th February 1891.

I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.

Nepal Gazi, the *Sahachar's Punch*, thus remarks on the Afghan policy of Government in that paper's issue for the 11th February :—

The Afghan policy of Government.

SAHACHAR,
Feb. 11th, 1891.

Russia and England are each waiting for an opportunity to cut the other's throat. The Russians are constructing forts and laying down railway lines, and the English are following suit. They have taken Quetta from the Khan of Beluchistan by giving him English-made soap, beads of false pearls, old chests, and such like things, and wasted a good deal of money in this way. They do not mind making themselves merry at Simla, because the money for all that comes from the people. They dream every night of Russia and the Cossacks, and they think that the Himalayas could be crossed in one leap. Did you not see how they dealt with that Raja of Cashmere simply from a fear of Russia? And yet the Czar has sent his son to this country. What empty demonstrations are being made in his favour? Both the English and the Russians are insincere in their dealings with each other. While professing great friendship for each other, they are in reality trying to harm each other. It is not in anybody's power to understand these doings of these Europeans. They themselves do not understand them. And yet they say that *we* are a very bad people. Well, we do not want to be good like them.

2. *Nepal Gazi* has the following on the expedition against the frontier tribes :—How is it that there is no cannonading yet? They have gone to the Miranzai Hill and set fire to the houses of the poor and destroyed their granaries. They are acting like veritable bugbears. They will nevertheless get medals and titles. But who will answer for the trouble they are unnecessarily giving to a large number of human beings?

3. The *Urdu Guide*, of the 13th February, condemns the conduct of the English in burning the standing crops and breaking the handmills of the Miranzais. Should men be starved to death simply because they are enemies?

SAHACHAR.

URDU GUIDE,
Feb. 13th, 1891.

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

4. The *Burdwan Sanjivani*, of the 10th February, says that the Railway Police of Burdwan behaved very rudely towards the pilgrims who came to the town for the purpose of bathing in the Ganges at the last *Ardhodaya yoga*. The police officers beat some of the pilgrims severely and roughly treated even the women.

The Burdwan Railway Police.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,
Feb. 10th, 1891.

5. The *Sahachar*, of the 11th February, says that now that the police has commenced keeping a register of the names of foreigners or of persons coming from very distant places, it ought also to keep a register of the names of the professional *gundas*, *lathials* and *habsis* who infest Calcutta, Benares, and all other large Indian towns. The police is powerless in dealing with them, and some such measure as the one proposed is necessary to keep them in check.

A register of professional bud-mashes.

SAHACHAR,
Feb. 11th, 1891.

6. The *Hitakari*, of the 11th February, says that the police cannot, in addition to its ordinary duties, satisfactorily watch the movements of convicted criminals and vagrants. This duty as well as the improvement of the breed of cattle, protecting sacrificial bulls, introducing field manures, communicating with Government doctors regarding the treatment of cattle, &c., may be, with advantage to the public, entrusted to punchayets. The punchayets may also be made to remove a great want by being trained as prompt and reliable informants to Government of such matters as famine, flood, cholera epidemic, and the like. The punchayets may also be employed to introduce the cultivation of new crops in particular localities, such as the cultivation of fine *rurhi* rice in Kushtea and Chooadanga.

Improvement of the punchayet system.

HITAKARI,
Feb. 11th, 1891.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Feb. 19th, 1891.

7. A correspondent of the *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika*, of the 19th February, says that a band of roughs or *gundas* have made their appearance at the Burdwan town. They maltreat way-farers. They have beaten a servant of the Deputy Magistrate, Babu Shyamakumad Mukherji, and the mukhtar who was engaged by him to conduct his case. The local public is uneasy on their account. Their oppressions should be checked.

Roughs at Burdwan.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

DACCA PRAKASH,
Feb. 15th, 1891.

8. The *Dacca Prakash*, of the 15th February, says that the people of Dacca feel greatly annoyed on account of the oppressive conduct of Babu Srinath Bhadra, Deputy Collector of that place. He frequently abuses the people in his Court and thereby deters them from expressing their views freely. He is charged with the collection of the road-cess, and he often knowingly tries to collect the cess from the party from whom it is not due. He has ruled that those who will not pay the road-cess after the issue of the certificate process may be arrested by means of a warrant.

Babu Srinath Bhadra, Deputy
Collector of Dacca.

KASIPUR NIVASI,
Second fortnight of
the month of Magh
1297 B.E.

9. The *Kasipurnivasi*, of the second fortnight of the month of Magh, says that as litigation has greatly increased in the district of Backergunge, the stations of Gaurunadi, Mehendiganj and Jhalakati should each have a munsifi. At present the town of Barisal has five munsifis, and yet the people from the mofussil who have to come to the town to conduct law-suits are put to very great inconvenience. It is hoped that the above proposal will be soon given effect to.

Additional munsifis for the
district of Backergunge.

(d)—Education.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,
Feb. 10th, 1891.

10. The *Burdwan Sanjivani*, of the 10th February, cannot understand why the Syndicate of the Calcutta University have resolved not to allow the Entrance and F.A. Examinations to be held in the Maharaja's College, Burdwan. The Assistant Inspector, who conducts those examinations, receives every help from the teachers and professors of the Maharaja's College. It is true, the Principal of the College absents himself from the examination hall, but his absence has never caused the smallest inconvenience to anybody. But if the Assistant Inspector thinks that the Principal ought to attend, let him say so, and the people of Burdwan will apply to the Raj estate to secure his attendance at the examination hall. The resolution of the Syndicate will cause great inconvenience to the candidates who come from the districts of Burdwan, Bankoora and Beerbhoom.

Burdwan as an examination
centre.

Reference is then made to the way in which the last Entrance Examination was held in the Maharaja's College, and the following remarks are made:—The Assistant Inspector, Beni Babu, who superintended the examination, had to suffer no inconvenience, and yet he recommended the abolition of Burdwan as an examination centre. But now that the work of superintending the examination has been so smoothly done, will he still adhere to his opinion that the University examinations should not be held in the Maharaja's College?

SAKTI,
Feb. 10th, 1891.

11. The *Sakti*, of the 10th February, referring to the resolution of the Calcutta University that the examiners must finish examining their papers within one month on pain of a daily fine, remarks that it is desirable that the results of the examinations should be speedily published, but it will be very improper to fine examiners like schoolboys. All who have any sense of self-respect will not after this agree to become examiners.

Fining the University exa-
miners.

URDU GUIDE,
Feb. 13th, 1891.

12. The *Urdu Guide*, of the 13th February, finds fault with the Urdu paper set in the last Entrance Examination, on the ground that the passage set for translation into English was more Persian than Urdu.

The Urdu paper in the Entrance
Examination.

SUDHAKAR,
Feb. 13th, 1891.

13. A correspondent of the *Sudhakar*, of the 13th February, says that every thoughtful man must admit that the interests of Mahomedan education require that the text-books now in use in the Madrassas and the system of instruction now obtaining

Mussulman education.

there should be changed. Their exclusive study of the languages in which the religious books of the Mussulmans are written and their neglect of the English and the vernacular languages has done great injury to Mussulman society. Many Mussulman students cannot enter the Madrassas because admission into those schools demands some preliminary knowledge of Persian, and there are now no primary schools in which Mussulman students can learn Persian. The Mussulmans should, therefore, ask Government to establish some upper primary schools in which Persian should be taught as a second language in addition to the upper primary standard. English should be taught as a second language up to the junior standard examination of the Madrassas, and the English text-book for the minor scholarship examination should also be the English text-book for the Madrassa examination. At present geography is not taught in the Madrassas and History and Mathematics are not satisfactorily taught. If the proposed primary schools be established, students will acquire a greater knowledge of the above subjects than they now possess before their admission into the Madrassas. After passing the junior standard examination, students may, according to their inclination, proceed to study Arabic or get themselves admitted into an Entrance school.

The reason why the Mussulmans are so far behind the other Indian peoples in the matter of education is that, until lately, they regarded the study of English as a sin. Another reason is that the Mussulman has to study so many as four or five languages in order to be able to maintain his position in society, in order to be religious, and in order to be able to do well in the world, and he is therefore at a great disadvantage compared with the Bengali, who has to study only English in addition to his own mother-tongue. The changes which it has become necessary to make in Mussulman education are well set forth in the book called "Chhahi Fatul Amal o Miratul Ahwal" by Maulavi Abdul Ali of the Hooghly College.

14. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 16th February, says that Lord Ripon and Lord Dufferin evinced much interest in technical education, but Lord Lansdowne never makes any mention of that matter. The Director of Public Instruction too is never heard to make any reference to it. The Bombay Government has earned public respect by extending its patronage to the local technical school, and will not the Bengal Government be led, after this, to establish a technical school in Bengal? In his last Convocation speech, the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University said that technical education should go hand in hand with liberal education. It is very necessary that, besides giving technical education in a school specially established for such instruction, some instruction in handicraft should be imparted in all the schools in the country. Some knowledge of handicraft is needed by the common people.

BENGAL EXCHANGE
GAZETTE,
Feb. 16th, 1891.

15. The *Kásipurnivási*, of the second fortnight of the month of Magh, says that, in consideration of the hard labour which the teachers of Government aided schools have to undergo in training their pupils for the examinations, a pension fund should be established for their benefit. It is hoped that the District Board of Barisal will give effect to this proposal.

KASIPUR NIVASI,
Second fortnight of
the month of Magh.

(g)—*Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.*

16. The *Uluberia Darpan*, of the 11th February, says that though the current Bengali year is about to close, yet not a single road in the Uluberia sub-division has been repaired during it. The members of the Local Board say that they sent the necessary estimates for the sanction of the District Board, and though they have repeatedly asked for it, sanction has not yet been given. The writer has drawn the attention of the Vice-Chairman and of one of the members of the District Board to the matter, but to no purpose.

ULUBERIA DARPAN,
Feb. 11th, 1891.

A new embankment on the bank of the Rupanarayan.

17. The same paper has the following :—

ULUBERIA DARPAN.

For a long time the river Rupanarayan washed away its banks and thereby destroyed hundreds of villages. Quite recently, Mr. Carter, the Engineer appointed by Government, succeeded in protecting the villages on its banks by

putting up sâl-wood piles, &c. And he so far succeeded in the attempt that the force of the current in the river decreased, and a large chur was formed in front of a tract of land extending from the village of Nasibpur to the bridge at Melyak. But now that Mr. Carter has been transferred his method of protecting the banks is set aside. His successor, Mr. DeMello, the Assistant Engineer of Panskura, proposes to destroy the embankment of the river extending over seven miles from the bridge at Birampore to the village of Kantapukur, and to construct, instead, a new embankment right through the villages lying within that area. But if this is done, an area seven miles long and two miles broad will fall outside the new embankment, and some 40 villages within that area will be destroyed by the river. The local officers have recommended the proposal on the ground that it will cost a small sum to construct the new *bund*, but why not revert to Mr. Carter's method which proved so successful? The Lieutenant-Governor is asked to make special enquiries into the matter, and to stop for the present the construction of the proposed *bund*. Mr. DeMello's proposal has alarmed the villagers.

ULUBERIA DARPAN,
Feb. 11th, 1891.

18. The same paper says that though the portion of the Cuttack road lying within the town of Uluberia was repaired only six month's ago, yet it already looks in disrepair, and has become unfit for use. The Sub-divisional Officer sees the miserable condition of the road every day, and the fact is known both to the Executive Engineer and to the Commissioner, Mr. Toynbee, and yet nothing has been done in the matter. It is hoped that the authorities will soon take steps to repair this road.

HITAKARI
Feb. 11th, 1891.

19. A correspondent of the *Hitakari*, of the 11th February, complains of the oppression committed by railway officers at the Kushtea station on the Eastern Bengal State Railway, on the occasion of the *Ardhodaya yoga*. They refused to sell tickets to those who did not agree to pay them perquisites. It is said that a Railway Baboo laid hands on the breast of a young native woman of a respectable family on the pretence of helping her into a carriage. They also grossly maltreated one Baboo Sitanath Sarkar, who was going to Nuddea in charge of 15 or 16 pilgrims. On Baboo Sitanath's refusing to pay the required perquisite, the ticket seller told him that he would not get a ticket, and instructed the policeman in attendance to turn him out of the place. The Baboo refused either to pay the perquisite or to leave the place. Fearing that some school boys present on the spot might give evidence against them, the ticket-seller and the station-master made them leave the place with the threat that if they tarried there railway fares would be exacted from them. Failing to get tickets Baboo Sitanath at last got into the train with the permission of the guard. But he had no sooner entered the carriage with his female companions than the booking clerk came up and tried to drag him out. The train, however, soon started. Some teachers and students of the Kushtea Amlapara school were eye-witnesses of this act of oppression.

SANJIVANI,
Feb. 14th, 1891.

20. A correspondent of the *Sanjivani*, of the 14th February, says that one Baboo Ratish Chandra Ghosh was grossly maltreated on the 4th February last by a ticket-collector at the Sealdah station named Abdul Kader and by a chowkidar for having interposed in favour of a Brahmin, whom the ticket-collector was pressing for the payment of fare for an infant under three years. It is also complained that now that the crowds of pilgrims who came to Calcutta on the occasion of the *yoga* are returning home, the Bengali ticket-collectors are keeping order among them by means of sticks, of which they are making a free use. This is discreditable to the railway.

BENGAL EXCHANGE
GAZETTE,
Feb. 14th, 1891.

21. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 14th February, says that the people employed in railway service in this country are very oppressive. They often insult officers and charge extra fees on passengers. They do not make timely arrangements for increased passenger traffic on special occasions. An instance of this was seen on the occasion of the recent *Ardhodaya yoga*, or the great bathing festival. The pilgrims who came to the town on that occasion had to suffer terribly for want of accommodation in the railway

trains. The railway authorities should have run extra trains on that occasion. If a festival like the one referred to had taken place in England, the authorities would have commenced making provision for increased railway accommodation two months before the date of the festival.

22. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika*, of the 17th February, says that cholera has broken out among the pilgrims who came to Calcutta and other places at the last bathing festival. The outbreak has become most serious at the station of Parvatipur on the Northern Bengal Railway, where a large number of pilgrims have already died and numbers are still dying daily. The local hospital has not accommodation for all these patients. The Railway Companies have made much profit from the increased passenger traffic on the occasion, but they have not made proper arrangements for the treatment of passengers in case of illness. They should have increased the number of their doctors and their supply of medicines for the occasion. Why were they in such a state of unpreparedness? Who shall answer this question?

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Feb. 17th, 1891.

(h)—General.

The income-tax.

23. The *Sahachar*, of the 11th February, has the following on the subject of the income-tax:—

SAHACHAR,
Feb. 11th, 1891.

The Bengal Chamber of Commerce have again protested against the income-tax. The financial position of Government has now improved. Its income has increased, while the loss from exchange has decreased. This being the case, what is the good of retaining the objectionable tax? That is certainly not a good tax which reduces capital, and this is particularly the case in this country where there is a dearth of capital and people borrow money at high rates of interest. Eighty percent. of the population of this country depend on agriculture for support, and are poor and heavily encumbered with debts. Thus the income-tax is not suited to the condition of the people of this country. It is, of course, the only tax which is paid by the Europeans, and its abolition will exempt that class from all taxation. But it is nevertheless not proper to retain a tax which means ruin to the natives of the country, simply because there is no other way of touching the purses of Europeans. If Government wants to reach the Europeans, it can do so by imposing a duty on those articles which are made use of by them. Direct taxation is not suited to India. And why to India alone? Mr. Gladstone once proposed its abolition in England. In France taxation has very much increased since the last war with Germany, but the Chamber of Deputies will not still hear of a income-tax. It was twice proposed by the French Government and twice rejected by the Chamber. Public opinion in this country is against the tax, and oppression is being really committed in the mofussil on account of it. Honest and inoffensive men pay the tax, while the dishonest or the characterless successfully evade it. According to M. Chevalier, the celebrated French financier, the morality of a nation depends on the fiscal policy of its Government, and the income-tax certainly tends to make people dishonest. As all classes of people are protesting against the tax, it will be a grave disregard of public opinion on the part of Government if it still retains it. It is for this reason that people are crying for a representative system of government.

III—LEGISLATIVE.

24. The *Rais-ul Akhbar Moorsshedabad*, of the 8th February, says that the opinion expressed in the Legislative Council by Nawab Khaja Ahsanulla on the Age of Consent Bill does not represent the views of the Indian people whom he represents.

RAIS-UL-AKBAR
MOORSHEDEABAD,
Feb. 8th, 1891.

25. The *Sakti*, of the 10th February, says that never before under the English rule did the Indians find themselves in a condition of so much uneasiness and excitement as they are now in. The Indians are now, in fact, running wildly about, not knowing what to do and where to go, and unable to stem the tide of grief that is swelling in their hearts. But though they have become mad, they are not violent; though they are alarmed, they are not desperate; though they are uneasy,

SAKTI,
Feb. 10th, 1891.

they are not disloyal. And that is why they are still imploring the Government and flooding its feet with their tears. Is there another such loyal people upon earth? It is certain that Government will have to repeal some day or other the law which it is going to make. Who shall say that the Hindus will not, in order to protect their honour and religion, slay with their own hands the causes of the destruction of their honour and religion, in the same way as some *Yugis* of Burrisal cut down their date trees rather than pay the tax which was imposed on those trees. A few such tragedies will compel the Government to repeal the law, and so the law will produce a social revolution, if not a rebellion.

It is not easy to see the secret political object which has influenced Government in introducing this Bill. It is difficult to believe that the Government which sticks to the policy of the Arms Act and refuses to enrol natives as volunteers has for its real object in the present Bill the conversion of the Indians into a nation of sturdy men. And so if the Bill, as seems more propable, has for its real object the sowing of the seeds of disunion, a policy which is much favoured by Government, the Bill is sure to pass. The cries and tears of the people will be in vain, but they still implore the Government not to hurl this deadly weapon at them. A law like this can never suit a country like India which contains men of divers nationalities. Lord Lansdowne! you should calmly consider all this. The Viceroy of India should not be influenced by fear or abuse. You should tell England that there are wailings all over India and then decide upon your course. The proposed law will affect both Hindus and Mussulmans, and there are, therefore, wailings among both those communities.

SAHACHAR,
Feb. 11th, 1891.

26. The *Sahachar*, of the 11th February, referring to the meeting of ten thousand persons at Bombay to protest against the Age of Consent Bill, observes as follows:—It is useless denying the fact that the Bill has alarmed the people of this country; and the question to be now asked is, whether or not it will really confer the amount of benefit that is expected from it. What do the public think of Mr. Manmohan Ghosh's proposal for raising the age of marriage instead of that of consent?

SAHACHAR.

The Age of Consent Bill.

27. *Nepal Gazi*, the *Punch* of the same paper, has the following on the Age of Consent Bill:—

They have given rise to much quarrel and bickering in the country. They are going to make a law under which a man will have to go to the Andamans if he touches his wife before she is 12. They have a similar law in their own country. But how many people will respect the law? In their own London there are a large number of houses where girls from 10 to 12 are kept and worn out rakes visit them. In my opinion, they cannot make any such law. Their object is to protect girls. There is no lack of fools.

HITAKARI,
Feb. 14th, 1891.

28. The *Hitakari*, of the 11th February, says that the remarks of Nawab Khaja Ahsan-u-ulla Khan Bahadur on the Age of Consent Bill are fully worthy of acceptance. The Nawab is the head of the Mussulman community, the leader of the East Bengal Mussulmans, and an ornament of the society to which he belongs.

BEHAR BANDHU,
Feb. 12th, 1891.

29. The *Behar Bandhu*, of the 12th February, says it is not true that the agitation against the Age of Consent Bill is confined to Bengal. Agitation is being made against the Bill throughout India.

AHMADI,
Feb. 12th, 1891.

30. The *Ahmadi*, of the 12th February, says that the English Government has always been a just Government, and has always refrained from interfering with men's religion. It

is, therefore, a matter of deep regret that it is now going to interfere with the religion and social customs of the people, and instead of directing its attention to the many important matters which demand careful consideration at its hands, has set about passing, on the unimportant subject of cohabitation, a shameful and dreadful law, which will be an injury and an insult to both Hindus and Mussulmans. Many people think that the proposed law will not in any way affect the Mussulmans. But the more deeply one reflects upon the subject, the more is one convinced of the necessity of protesting strongly against the Bill. The proposed law will destroy the religion of the Mussulmans and will be injurious to them.

Mahammad, the great prophet of the Mussulmans, married his wife Ayesha in her sixth year and cohabited with her in her ninth year, and thereby set an example of early cohabitation to his followers. Any Mussulman who will prohibit what his great teacher did not prohibit will become a fallen man.

The Koran speaks of early marriage. Indeed, in the case of orphan girls, it enjoins marriage before such girls have become *bálega*, or have commenced to menstruate. The Koran and the Hadis nowhere lay down any definite age for cohabitation. The fixing of any definite age for cohabitation would therefore be an interference with those books. A proof of this will be found at page 167 of the second volume of *Jadalmad*.

It is clear from these injunctions in the Koran and the Hadis about the marriage of girls who have not menstruated that cohabitation before 11 is sanctioned by those authorities. The Mussulman religion requires a girl to be married as soon as she attains puberty. Mussulman religious books say that *balgiyat* (menstruation) commences in the ninth year. Cohabitation at 10 or 11 is not therefore opposed to the Mussulman religion, nay, is sanctioned by it. If the proposed law is passed early marriage will be abolished.

The Mussulman community having now become very poor, poor Mussulman parents marry their daughters at an early age, thereby relieving themselves of the charge of feeding them and of protecting their honour. The proposed law will, if passed, cause great hardship to these poor parents and make it difficult for them to protect the honour of their grown-up unmarried daughters. To keep a grown up unmarried daughter in a poor man's house is as dangerous as cherishing a deadly serpent within it.

Mussulmans in this country have now nothing left but their religious devotion and social *ijjut*. If the proposed law is passed, that devotion and that much loved *ijjut* will be gone.

31. The *Urdu Guide*, of the 13th February, draws the attention of the opponents of the Age of Consent Bill to the cases of Narayan Dasi and Ashutosh Banerji, which show in the clearest manner the horrid evils of early marriage.

URDU GUIDE,
Feb. 13th, 1891.

32. The *Sudhakar*, of the 13th February, says that the Central National Mahomedan Association has, at a recent meeting of its members, strongly protested against the Age of Consent Bill. Indeed, a careful consideration of the subject will show that Government is by no means justified in interfering in this matter. The Mussulman religion lays down no definite age for cohabitation. But it is agreeable to the teachings of that religion that cohabitation should take place as soon as both husband and wife feel the carnal desire. It is not at all probable that that desire is not felt by a girl under 12.

SUDHAKAR,
Feb. 13th, 1891.

To set any limit to that for which no limit has been fixed by Islam amounts to interference with that religion. There is nothing in Islam that is superfluous or redundant, and there is no part of it that can be altered, modified, or omitted. Islam is based on the Koran and the Hadis, and it can not be altered in consideration of climate, age, or personality. Any interference with the holy rules about cohabitation fixed by Islam will destroy the sanctity of that religion.

It is a matter of deep regret that the Mussulmans are gradually losing their mental strength and independence of character. Few men of independent spirit are found among their big men. They have become such abject sycophants that they approve even of the wrong actions of Government without the slightest regard to their own interests or to the teachings of Islam. And they are acting in this spirit in the present agitation.

A great wrong will be done to the Mussulmans if the present Bill is passed. To make that matter a subject of legislation which should be regulated by social opinion is to deal a heavy blow to society. If there be any delicate matter in this world, it is the cohabitation of husband and wife. And the proposed law will proclaim this most delicate affair far and wide and by beat of drum. Can flesh and blood bear that marriage couples should be put to shame in this way before parents and other honoured elders? Is it not a monstrous and lamentable thing that the fact of cohabitation between married couples, who are ashamed of sitting together or talking with each other in the presence of these elders, should be noised in the law-courts? The fact is, Government is about to do violence to the modesty of the people by interfering in this very

secret and delicate matter. The Mussulman community cannot therefore approve of this law. By proposing this law, Government also means to tell the world that the Indians treat their wives like brutes—their wives, whom they regard as their better halves. To acquiesce in such a law would be to proclaim oneself a brute. Does not Government know that no people on earth honour their women so much as the Mussulmans?

If the age of consent be now fixed at 12, no one can say that it will not, at the instance of the reformers and the British public, be raised at some future time to 14 or even to 16.

Government wants to reassure the people by telling them that the police will not take cognisance of the offences under the proposed law, and warrants will be issued in such cases only on the institution of complaints. But not even this will be sufficient protection from harassment in the case of the Mussulmans. Mussulmans, in many cases, marry their cousins, and when they do so, husband and wife cannot help living in the same house, though they do not cohabit with each other. And what will be the state of the family of such a husband if an enemy brings against him a false charge of premature cohabitation? There will be no other way of disproving the charge than a medical examination. And one must abhor the very thought of such an examination. Yes, the ladies of the zenana will be subjected to a medical examination which even prostitutes hate with all their hearts. What a dreadful thing! Some say that few persons were troubled under the 10-year law, and few will be troubled under the proposed 12-year law. But if the proposed law is to remain a dead-letter, what is the good of making it?

It is very astonishing that the Indian Mussulmans have not yet protested against this Bill. Those who give it as their opinion that the proposed law will not in any way interfere with Islam are asked to say whether it is not the injunction of Islam that a girl should be married at the age at which she may possibly feel the carnal desire, and whether women in this country do not show all the signs of youth between their tenth and twelfth year. The writer is alarmed and surprised to see that Government is going to give rise to many serious evils by endeavouring to remove one which is of an inconsequential nature.

EDUCATION GAZETTE,
Feb. 13th, 1891.

The meaning of the opposition
to the Age of Consent Bill.

33. The *Education Gazette*, of the 13th February, has the following in connection with the Age of Consent Bill:—

Some people are wondering how and why most of the English-knowing young men in this country are opposing the Age of Consent Bill. There is an impression in men's minds that a good knowledge of English necessarily denationalises its recipients and makes them hate the religion and customs of their country. The un-Hindu and English-like conduct and behaviour of the first generation of English-knowing men gave rise to this impression. Indeed, the rage for Anglicism went so far among them that a giant of English learning of that time used to sprinkle brandy over his children's rice, saying, 'take with your rice this milk from the English cow, it will make you strong'.

Some English-knowing people of that time thought that the manners and customs of the people of India were Satan's devices, while others regarded them as Brahminical artifices. With them it was manliness, *par excellence*, to hate those manners and customs. Yes, that passed for moral courage and independence. And the English-knowing youths who behaved in this way were counted wise by the Englishmen of their time. And men like them are still counted wise by Englishmen in Bombay, Madras and the Punjab. English-knowing men there have their belief in Brahminical craft and cunning still unshaken.

But it is now somewhat different with English-knowing men in Bengal. It is the Bengalis who first took to English learning with avidity, and it is they who showed the intensest hatred to their *Shastras* and became most anglicised. But the style and tenor of their thought has been changed by their perusal of Darwin, Comte and Spencer, and they see the necessity of not severing the present from the past, and have realised the fact that like a living physical organism the growth and decay of the social organism is also determined by causes internal to itself; that the several parts of the social organism are dependent on one another; that social organism is not a thing that can be constructed or demolished at pleasure. It is for this reason that thereforming zeal is somewhat

cooled among English-knowing Bengalis. The present generation of English-knowing Bengalis have moved a great way off the position which was occupied by their predecessors two generations ago, while the leaders of the educated in Bombay and other provinces are still occupying precisely that position. The English-knowing Bengalis of the present day have ceased reviling the customs of this country, have come to know that customs infinitely worse than theirs still prevail in countries which boast of their civilisation, and have learnt to realise the truth that the customs of a country have always a sound basis. It is true, they are still fond of the western ideas of "evolution" and "science in all things," but it is perfectly clear that they have nevertheless quitted a great deal of their old sentimentalism, thoughtlessness and passion for imitation.

34. The *Surabhi-o-Pátaká*, of the 13th February, has the following on the Age of Consent Bill:—

SURABHI-O-PATAKA,
Feb. 13th, 1891.

The Age of Consent Bill.

The statement that the people of Bengal alone are agitating against the Bill is untrue. News of a strong agitation against the Bill is being received from various parts of India. In fact, the agitation has gradually become universal. Will Government pass the Bill in the face of so much opposition?

Some say that Government is determined to pass the Bill in spite of all this agitation against it, and things look as if it will really do so. Steps are being taken to hurry the Bill through the Council. It is rumoured that Sir Andrew Scoble will shortly leave for England, and he will see the Bill passed before his departure from the country. It is superfluous to state that the passing of the Bill in its present form will do great mischief to the country. It is very improper to act with haste on occasions like this. But the people of India are enjoying liberty under the British Raj, and why should the Government listen to what they say?

Many people surmise that the Bill has been introduced with the object of ruining the Congress, and this surmise does not seem to be incorrect; for the anti-native, English and Eurasian newspapers are saying that, if the Congressists do not support the Bill, they will be considered unfit to obtain political rights. Many people really think that the Congress will lose the sympathy of its European supporters if it does not support the Bill. But if the Congress supports the Bill, it is sure to be looked upon with suspicion by the conservatives in this country. It is very necessary to act cautiously in this dilemma.

35. Referring to the large concourse of pilgrims in Calcutta on the occasion of the *Ardhodaya Yoga*, the same paper observes as follows:—

SURABHI-O-PATAKA

The Age of Consent Bill and the *Ardhodaya Yoga*.

Englishmen! do not in your pride of wealth and power, rob any one of his *dharma*, which is to him a priceless treasure. It is not heroism to oppress the weak. Even the weak, when wounded to the quick, try to be avenged on their oppressors. Even a non-venomous snake bites the man who treads upon it. Englishmen! the Hindu as well as the Mussulman considers his religion to be as holy and pure as you consider yours to be. It is the duty of the ruler to protect the religion of his subjects. We have taken the opportunity of this great Yoga, of this wonderful demonstration of religious faith and feeling, to remind you of this fact.

36. The *Banganivási*, of the 13th February, says that Mr. Manmohan Ghosh is not satisfied with the Age of Consent Bill. He

BANGANIVASI,
Feb. 13th, 1891.

The Age of Consent Bill.

would have Government forcibly abolish early marriage itself, although he knows that to abolish early marriage would be to destroy the religion of the Hindus. The Viceroy knows that it is not an easy thing to accept Mr. Ghosh's proposal; and it is because he knows this that he said the other day in the Legislative Council "that such a change in the law would simply revolutionise the social system of Hindus." And yet Mr. Ghosh would have Government bring about such a revolution! The Indians have now found out their pretended friends, and if the Government also finds out its pretended friends, it will not abolish early marriage or revolutionise Hindu society. If it passes the Age of Consent Bill it will revolutionise not only Hindu society, but many other societies, as will appear from the speech delivered by Syud Golam Mustapha at a protest meeting held at Dacca. The Syud is reported to have expressed himself at the meeting to the following effect:—

"Is it proposed to destroy the sanctity of our zenana by sending doctors and policemen into it for the ascertainment of age? Let the poor

inoffensive Hindus put up with this insult, but the Mussulman, who does not value his life more than his honour, will first cut off the heads of the doctor and policeman and will then lay down his own life. He will say—'what right have you, sala, to destroy my honour? Get you gone, or I will cut off your head with this sword?'"

It is clear from this that the Age of Consent Bill will bring about just the revolution which Government is so anxious to prevent, and which, in its opinion, will attend the abolition of early marriage. Just fancy the dilemma in which society will be placed. There will be on one side of it the fear of sin in this world and the next, and there will be on its other side the fear of the law. And does Government mean, by placing the people in this dilemma, to convince them that it has no wish to interfere with the Hindu marriage customs? It is a mistake to think that the Hindu marriage custom will not be interfered with by the proposed law, and people will not acquit Government of such an intention so long as it does not withdraw the Bill under the conviction that it will involve such interference. Mr. Ghosh, a member of the British Reform Committee, has explicitly declared that the Committee wants the Government to destroy the Hindu religion. The Mussulman rulers never made covert attacks upon the religion of the Indians. Like true heroes they destroyed sword in hand the religions of those whom they conquered. If the English Government professes one thing and does another, the Indians will certainly feel convinced that, seeing the failure of missionary work in this country, it is now using in a most cowardly spirit this weapon of a deceitful law to achieve the object which missionary enterprise has failed to accomplish.

BANGANIVASI,
Feb. 13th, 1891.

37. The same paper says that the Indians are suffering oppression in all matters. The Government under which they live, and which is bound to protect them, has become their enemy. Many are the oppressions that are being committed by Government. It is oppressing the people in the matter of trade, education, eating, drinking, in short, in everything. Government has, in pursuance of its oppressive policy, abolished agriculture and the manufactures from this country, and has made the people worse than beggars by depriving them, forcibly or guilefully, of the products of their own country.

But all these oppressions notwithstanding, the Indians were happy in their hearts. As soon as they entered their own homes, they forgot all about these oppressions by Government. Their homes were to them like so many little kingdoms in which they were sole unquestioned sovereigns. But it will, it seems, not be so much longer, for the English seem bent on invading and destroying the sanctity of these little kingdoms of theirs. The English Government seems resolved to regulate Indian society by legislation; but such legislation will do no good and will do much harm. Indeed, it will utterly humble the Indian woman's pride of chastity. Under foreign domination the Indians have lost everything and are suffering miseries which they never suffered before. Their valour and prowess have vanished, their arms are benumbed, and their learning is gone. It is foreign domination which is the cause of all these miseries of theirs. The Bengalis are, indeed, a very inoffensive people; but it is certain that, though inoffensive, they will not be able to bear so much oppression.

The oppression is becoming unbearable. The officials are trying to force their subordinates to approve the Age of Consent Bill. Why this oppression upon poor people? People could not even dream that any oppression could be committed under the civilised English Government. But they now see that Government is making all possible endeavours to ruin them. It has laid a trap for their ruin, and they are helpless, because Government itself is the oppressor. But it should be borne in mind that even the worm may sting some day or other. Sir Alfred Croft, the Director of Public Instruction, is trying to obtain from his subordinates by force or guile an approval of the Bill, and he has in his officiousness summoned Pundit Mahesh Chandra back and tried to entrap him. Why try to ruin the Indians by entrapping Pundit Mahesh Chandra by means of questions, when he has already expressed his opinion on the subject?

Government is also putting pressure upon the members of the Congress, through Mr. Hume, to approve the Bill. It has told Mr. Hume that if he wants his Congress to be successful, he must make its members express themselves in

favour of the Bill, and Mr. Hume has communicated that fact to its members. This is why some un-Hindu gentlemen like Babu Surendra Nath Banerji and Mr. Manmohan Ghosh are supporting the Bill. And it is to be feared that this may lead Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee too to support it.

38. The *Bangavasi*, of the 14th February, says that the Hindus regard child marriage alone as the right marriage, and the Hindu *shastras* too say this. That the Hindus are so alarmed and excited at the proposal to raise the age of consent is because it will ultimately interfere with early marriage and consequently with their religion. Mr. Manmohan Ghosh may not understand that the prevention of child marriage will excite all India, that is to say, the 15 crores of Hindus and the five crores of Mussulmans in British India, but Government clearly understands this. The wonderfully philanthropic members of the British Committee, of whom Mr. Manmohan Ghosh is one, have recommended the abolition of early marriage itself. But the Viceroy has plainly declared that the recommendation cannot be accepted. It is said that Mr. Ghosh has formed a party, of which Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter is one, who want to put a stop to early marriage with the help, if not of a criminal at least of a civil law. It will be a sad thing to find Sir Romesh Chunder in this party. No sensible man should encourage the frantic efforts of those who seek to accomplish the impossible. The Viceroy and his Council cannot encourage such frantic efforts. Early marriage cannot be stopped by legislation. People do not look upon the Viceroy and his councillors as so many fools.

BANGAVASI,
Feb. 14th, 1891.

39. The same paper says that everybody must remember the strong agitation that was made by the Anglo-Indians against the Ilbert Bill which proposed to entrust some competent native judicial officers with jurisdiction over Englishmen. Everybody must also see what a difference there is between that Ilbert Bill and the present Scoble Bill. The former only proposed to entrust native judicial officers with jurisdiction over a little more than a lakh of Englishmen without in any way affecting their lives and property, but the latter deals a heavy blow to the religion and immemorial religious practices of 15 crores of Hindus, five crores of Mussulmans, and lakhs of Jains and others. And yet the Anglo-Indians made an agitation against the former Bill, on the plea of interference with an old right, which alarmed Lord Ripon and made him withdraw the Bill. But this native agitation against the Scoble Bill is producing no such effect. The two instruments of agitation are newspapers and meetings. But the Sovereign and her ministers do not understand the native languages, and many of those who are protesting against the Bill do not know English, and are therefore expressing their opinions in their vernaculars. It is to the opinion of the pandits that Government should attach the greatest weight. But unfortunately the Viceroy and the Law Member do not and cannot attend to protests against the Bill made in the native languages like the protests that are made in this paper. No one can know all that is being said in the Bengali dailies and weeklies. There is also no room in the English weeklies for all that is being said, nor is there any English weekly that can be recognised as an organ of the Hindus or the Mussulmans. The want of such an English weekly is being sorely felt at the present moment. A defence association, similar to that which was established by the Anglo-Indians on the occasion of the Ilbert Bill, should be established by Hindus and Mussulmans. The Hindu zemindar of Uttarpara, Raja Peary Mohun Mukharji, is trying to establish such an association and to start such an English daily. Everybody should join the proposed defence association.

BANGAVASI.

40. The same paper says that everybody may and ought to take a lesson from the immense gathering of pilgrims on the 8th February last on the occasion of the *Ardhodaya yoga*. If the Viceroy and his councillors have not become blind, deaf, and dull in intellect, they will certainly take a lesson from this gathering. After the Sepoy war the Queen reassured her Indian subjects by saying — "You have nothing to fear any longer. No officer of mine will interfere with your religion after this." But now this promise of the Queen is going to be broken. Lord Lansdowne and his Law Member are going to deal a blow to the religion of the people. If this gathering of pilgrims does not bring them to their senses, nothing will.

BANGAVASI.

The *Ardhodaya yoga* and the Age of Consent Bill.

BANGAVASI,
Feb. 14th, 1891.

41. The same paper says that the reference made by the *Pioneer* to Sir Charles Napier and the question of *suttee* in Scinde is calculated to fill men's minds with alarm. The *Pioneer* ought not to have published that story now, when so strong a religious agitation is going on in the country. It may lead people to think that Government will forcibly abolish the sacred *garbhádhán* ceremony. The *Pioneer*, nay, the majority of Englishmen think that Hindus are guilty of outrages upon little girls; and if such an impression had not existed in their minds, the Age of Consent Bill would not have been introduced. But this is an erroneous as well as a dangerous impression. The Hindu never attempts to cohabit with his wife before she has menstruated. Indeed, cohabitation before menstruation is opposed to the *shastras* and to the established practice in this country. Government has not yet brought forward any proof of the fact that cohabitation with little girls is common among Hindus. Nor is it possible for it to prove this, because that practice does not exist among Hindus. Why then cast unjust aspersions upon Hindu society? Why then endeavour to pass this severe law?

Englishmen may point to Hari Maiti's case. But how many Hari Maitis are there in the country? And Hari Maiti belonged to a low caste. And why bring an indictment against the whole Hindu community for the fault of at the most 10 or 20 persons among them? More than a hundred persons are crushed to death every year in the railways. Would anybody on that account abolish railways from the country?

The Anglo-Indian papers ridicule Hindus for their practice of piercing their bodies with hooks, throwing children into the sea, and making human sacrifices. The opinion of two leading pandits of Purvasthali in Burdwan on this subject is given below:—

- (1) The practice of piercing the body with hooks is not enjoined in the *shastras*.
- (2) Human sacrifice is enjoined in the *shastras*, but only a King can offer such sacrifice, and such sacrifice is prohibited in the *kaliyuga*.
- (3) The practice of throwing children into the sea is not enjoined in the *shastras*. There is an ancient tradition that those whose children died after birth vowed a child to the Ganges, and when they got two or three children they threw one into the waters. But when they did so, they took care to have near them some female relative who picked up the child as soon as it was thrown into the waters, and the child was thenceforth called the "picked-up child" of her who picked it up. No case is known of the absolute abandonment of a child.
- (4) The practice of *suttee* is enjoined in the *shastras*, and great reward is promised for it, but its non-observance does not entail sin.

ARYAVARTA,
Feb. 14th, 1891.

42. The *Aryavarta*, of the 14th February, says that Her Majesty does not look upon Englishmen and natives with equal eyes, and asks whether she will interfere with the religious and social observances of the Indians in violation of her promise to the contrary.

ARYAVARTA,

43. The same paper says that unlike the European, the Hindu has to think of his religion in every act of his life, and it will be impossible to give the Viceroy any idea of Hindu feeling in these matters. Even if hundreds of Phulmanis die, the feeling of Hindu women towards their husbands will not change. The existing law provides for the punishment of offenders like Hari Maiti.

SANJIVANI,
Feb. 14th, 1891.

44. The *Sanjivani*, of the 14th February, has the following about the doctors who have opposed the Age of Consent Bill:—

"Susruta says that a child born of a mother under sixteen does not live and is very weak if it lives, and this view is supported by Raghunandan in his *Jyotishtattwa*. According to the Hindu *shastras*, a son is required to offer the *pinda* to his ancestors. But what spiritual good will a Hindu father derive from a son, brought forth prematurely, who will die before him? It is to be regretted that even those who pique themselves upon their education look

more to the established practice than to the real spirit and object of the *shastras*. Dr. Jagadbandhu Bose's statements cannot be accepted as authoritative, so long as he does not support them by quotations from works on Physiology. Dr. Duncan and others who have studied the question for a long time say the very reverse of what Dr. Bose says. The doctors who have given their opinion in favour of the opponents of the Bill may or may not have been paid for their opinion. But it is easy to show that the opinion of the majority of these doctors has no value whatever. Almost all of them say that they have not come across a single case in which a girl under 12 sustained any injury by cohabiting with her husband. But these doctors were not asked to say whether the cohabitation of a girl under 12 with her husband can produce any injury. The real truth would have been out if that question had been put to them. The opponents of the Bill would have the public believe that Dr. Dayal Chandra Shom, who is a specialist in the treatment of female diseases, does not see any necessity for the Age of Consent Bill. But a friend of ours had a talk with him the other day in the course of which he said that he does not think that any physician can say that early cohabitation does not produce mischievous effects, that he would have explicitly declared that such cohabitation produces mischievous effects if he had been asked to give his opinion on this point, and that he replied only to the question which had been put to him. It is no wonder that, in a country where women are not allowed to be helped in their delivery by male physicians even if they are brought to the point of death, male physicians should not be called in to treat injuries received in premature cohabitation, or rather that, where the foremost thought is, how a disgrace is to be concealed, no physician, male or female, should be called in. Dr. Debendra Nath Roy, of the Campbell Medical School, says that he is aware of no case in which a girl under 12 met with injuries from cohabitation with her husband. And it is not likely that he should know of any such case, for there is not a man that after committing such a shame would like to call in a doctor. Hindu women are distinguished for their modesty, and they will rather die than inform any physician of their secret maladies. And how will those inform physicians of the disgraceful deeds of their husbands who do not inform physicians of their secret maladies? This is why Dr. Debendra Nath was never called in to treat a case of this kind. But the Doctor explicitly declared at a meeting of the Madhya Banga Sammilani that the age of consent should not be fixed below 14.

A homœopathic practitioner, Dr. Haranath Roy, has given the following opinion :—

"The period of menstruation in this country cannot be fixed with any degree of certainty or precision. It depends very much upon individual constitutions, upon the development and growth of the individual girls. I know of many cases where menstruation has taken place at the tenth and the eleventh year. I knew also of some cases in which the child-bearing period commenced at the eleventh year.

"As the Bill is no effective remedy for the evil, and as it interferes with the religious institutions and social usages of the country, it ought to be shelved."

But at pages 354-355 of a book on Midwifery published by him in 1887, he says :—

"The first menstruation generally takes place between the 13th and the 16th year. If the fourteenth year be taken as the average age of menstruation, the body and generative organ of a woman do not attain their full development till seven more years have elapsed, that is to say, no woman can before that time, easily and without prejudice to her own health, give birth to a healthy and strong child. The bones of a woman do not attain their full development at the age at which she first menstruates. The body of a woman does not become sufficiently strong before 24, and that of a man before 28. If a child is therefore born before that time, it cannot be sufficiently strong. Besides this, if a woman becomes *enciente* before the full development of her physical structure, her own frame suffers from the employment of her vital power in the nourishment of the child, and she ultimately becomes sickly or grows prematurely old, and dies at an early age."

Which of these two statements of the doctor is right? He now says:—

"I cannot subscribe to the statement that the offspring of early marriage are stunted, imperfect, and dwarfish and Lilliputian bipeds." But three years ago he wrote in his book on Midwifery—"In a year or a year and a half after such premature menstruation, a girl becomes *enciente*, and gives birth to a child in or before the due time. What wonder that her child should be weak, feeble, and of stunted growth, and that she herself should suffer from the *sutiká* disease after delivery, and should after that pass her life miserably from the effects of menstrual and many other diseases."

The experienced Calcutta doctors may not know of such cases; but mofussil doctors have some experience of such things. We refer here to a case of this kind communicated to us by Dr. Srish Chandra Roy of Harinavi in the 24-Pergunnahs (see R. N. P. for 30th August 1890, paragraph 63). If every Doctor now relates his experiences freely, many a horrid tale of cohabitation with child wives will come to the notice of the public. We publish here two other cases communicated to us by Dr. Sridhar Banerji, physician to the Maharaja of Masuda in Rajputana. In one of these cases he saw a girl of 11, in Kansaripari in Calcutta, in such a bad condition from cohabitation with a husband of 30, that she would have surely died if the bleeding had remained unchecked for another ten minutes. In the other case, a girl in Lahore died because she was unable to give birth to the child in her womb.

We are in possession of clear proofs that many are supporting the Bill in the meetings which have been held to protest against it. We only publish letters from Kushtea, Naraingunge, and Alisakanda in Tangail, which will show this.

The Government of India is the real guardian of the India people. Only a civilised and powerful Government like the English Government are fit rulers of a people so superstitious and mentally so weak as the Indians. The Government of India have introduced many good measures for the benefit of the Indians, and those measures have promoted the happiness of the people. It is a characteristic of people afflicted with mental weakness to mistake heinous crime for religion and good morality, but it is the duty of the Government to root out those crimes, and to establish true religion and right morality in their place. People affected with mental maladies cannot easily realise that they are diseased. But this should not make a conscientious Government swerve from its duty. Deeply rooted evils cannot be removed except by executive interference.

SAMAJ-O-SAHITYA,
Feb. 15th, 1891.

45. The *Samáj-o-Sahitya*, of the 15th February, has the following on the *Pioneer's* advice to Government to pass the Age of Consent Bill by force, based on the story of Sir Charles Napier and the *suttee* rite in Scinde:—

These statements of the *Pioneer* have wounded every Hindu's feeling. Will Government, then, forcibly and in defiance of truth and justice, hang this millstone of a dreadful law round the neck of Hindu society. Will the English, then, destroy by force the religion, honour, and freedom of the Hindus? Englishmen! you are the conquerors, we are the conquered; you are a free people, we are a subject people; you are rich, we are poor; and this is why you are going to commit this oppression upon us. This is why you are going to interfere with the religious practices of the Hindus. This is why you are turning a deaf ear to the people's cry for mercy. This is why you are driving a knife into the Hindu's throat in the Hindu's own country.

Pioneer! you are a *mlechha* and an alien in religion, and it is not in your power to understand the religion of the Hindus! You became civilised only the other day, and it is not for you to understand ancient Hindu society. How will you enter into the feelings which prompt the Hindu widow to immolate herself on the funeral pyre of her husband? You are going to reform by legislation a society in which marriage means, not your agreement or contract, but the union of soul with soul, and in which the object of marriage is the control of the sexual desire and not its indulgence. But you are not, after all, to blame for it; for the advice you have given to Government is such advice as can proceed from your small intellect. But it is necessary that you should be made to know your mistake. You have, it is true, abolished *suttee*, but you have not abolished the Hindu widow's self-immolation. The English have benefited society, and

not injured it by abolishing *suttee*. But if they forcibly pass the Age of Consent Bill, they will give pain to millions of people and shall be cursed by them. The precedent on whose strength you advise the Government to pass the Consent Bill by force is of no value, for *suttee* was not a practice enjoined by the *Shastras*. We believe that the Government will not listen to your advice; but if it passes the Bill at your advice, neither it nor the country will fare well. You say that outrages upon little girls may be a sacred custom with the Hindus, but it is nevertheless proper that the perpetrators of such outrages should be punished! Foolish Englishmen! from whence had you this novel information? You must have had your own corrupt society in your mind when you said this. You cannot possibly obtain any correct information regarding the Hindu zenana, where not even the sun can go. And you prefer such a charge against the Hindus, who do not know even the name of oppression, whose object in marriage is self-control, and with whom wives are not instruments of sensual gratification.

English Government! you have many councillors, but most of them are foolish men. Listen, then, to those alone whom the law will affect.

46. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandriká*, of the 15th February, says that a consideration of the attempt which is being made by Government to interfere with the religion of Hindus, Mussulmans and Jains by means of the Age of Consent Bill, and of the full probability of similar attempts being made hereafter, makes it necessary for the Indians to establish a defence association like the one which was established by the Anglo-Indians on the occasion of the Ilbert Bill. If the strong and dominant Anglo-Indians have felt such an association to be necessary, it must be necessary in a far greater measure for the weak and conquered natives. It is said that a prospectus, explaining the objects of a native defence association, has been issued by Raja Pearymohan Mukherji of Uttarpara and is in course of circulation. It will be a matter of rejoicing if an English daily, which will be a true organ of the Hindus and Mussulmans, can be started by the Raja as he proposes doing.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Feb. 15th, 1891.

47. The *Dacca Prákásh*, of the 15th February, has the following on the Age of Consent Bill:—

DACCA PRAKASH,
Feb. 15th, 1891.

The present Bill owes its origin to a mistaken notion in the mind of the English people. In England, which is a cold country, no girl becomes fit for sexual intercourse before her fourteenth year. And the people of England infer from this that girls in no country of the world become fit for sexual intercourse before that age. No one in this country has taken the trouble to ascertain at what age sexual intercourse proves beneficial or detrimental to women. The opinions which have been given by English doctors on this subject are opinions based upon English notions, and do not mean the result of experiments made in this country. It will, therefore, be, in the highest degree, wrong to pass the proposed law on the strength of those opinions. No medical man in this country has yet been able to prove by satisfactory evidence that girls become sickly or diseased by cohabiting with their husbands after menstruation. It has been said that cohabitation at an early age tends to make women sickly and their children weak. Now the statement regarding the mothers of children cannot be accepted as correct, until it is ascertained how many girls in this country become diseased, what are the diseases they suffer from by cohabiting with their husbands after they have commenced to menstruate, and whether or not the same number of girls suffer from the same diseases in countries where early cohabitation does not prevail. And the statement regarding children is opposed to well-established facts. For the earlier born are invariably found to be stronger than the later born.

48. The *Som Prákásh*, of the 16th February, publishes a letter embodying a *vyavastha* given by the pandits of Benares strongly protesting against the Age of Consent Bill. Various texts from the Vedas and Dharma Sastras are quoted in this letter to prove the binding character of the injunction relating to sexual intercourse during menses. In the opinion of the pandits, the Bill will, if passed, subvert Hindu society altogether.

SOM PRAKASH,
Feb. 16th, 1891.

SAMVAD PRABHAKAR,
Feb. 17th, 1891.

49. The *Samvād Prabhākar*, of the 17th February, says that the cause of the present weakness of the Bengalis is to be found not in their early marriage, but in their new love of luxury, in their non-observance of the ancient modes of living, in want of nutritious food, in undue intellectual labour in youth, and in want of physical exercise. Early cohabitation has always existed in this country, and yet the generations which have just passed away were strong and healthy men.

The food of the people of Bengal is extremely simple and does not include articles like flesh and wine, which have a tendency to increase the carnal appetite. That the opposition to the Bill is strongest in Bengal is because education has spread more widely here than in the other provinces. The present agitation is not a fussy agitation. The Indians are crying because the Bill will have the effect of making their women unchaste. It is hoped that the Select Committee will, in consideration of all this, recommend the withdrawal of the Bill.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Feb. 17th, 1891.

50. The *Dainik-o-Samāchār Chandrikā*, of the 17th February, says that, according to the *Indian Daily News* newspaper, there ought not to be any more delay in passing the Age of Consent Bill, seeing that Raja Durga Churn Law has declared himself in favour of the measure. But the Raja is not a Brahmin; nor is he a leader of Hindu Society; nor do his own caste men even recognise him as their leader.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA.

51. The same paper says that some Calcutta people contemplate convening a meeting for the purpose of advising Government to introduce a clause in the Age of Consent Bill, empowering husbands to perform *garbhadhan* at the first menstruation, at whatever age that event may take place. The introduction of such a clause may remove the religious objection of the Hindus, but it will leave the case of the Jains, Mahomedans, and other sections of the Indian people unaltered. The Bill should therefore be dropped altogether.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Feb. 19th, 1891.

52. The *Dainik-o-Samāchār Chandrikā*, of the 19th February, says that even in England there is a party against the Age of Consent Bill. It is said that the majority of the members of the India Council are opposed to this Bill. It is wrong on the part of Government to interfere in a matter which has nothing to do with the question of the safety of the Empire, and interference in which, instead of strengthening Government, will weaken it. Fifteen-sixteenths of the population of India are opposed to the Bill. The Bill is being protested against not only in Bengal, but also in Rajputana, Oudh, Bombay, Behar, and the Punjab. The Mussulmans have combined with the Hindus in protesting against it. The Viceroy should therefore be very careful.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,
Feb. 10th, 1891.

53. A correspondent of the *Burdwan Sanjivani*, of the 10th February, says that, as rules 4 and 5 of the census instructions are not in unison with the instructions regarding the filling up of the fourth and fifth columns of the census schedules, enumerators in the sub-division of Culna are greatly perplexed as to how they should fill up those columns. Besides, there being no definite instructions regarding the entering of caste sub-divisions in the case of Mahomedans, there is likely to be a difference of opinion as to the columns under which such sub-divisions should be entered. The name of the caste is required to be entered in the fourth column, and its sub-divisions are required to be entered in the fifth column. But under the fourth rule such tribal designations as Mogul, Pathan, &c., are required to be written in the fourth and fifth columns. The other day some of the members of a Mahomedan sect went to the Deputy Magistrate of Culna at his camp at Mahmudpore in the Culna sub-division, and pointed out to him the necessity of stating the caste in the fourth, and its sub-divisions in the fifth column. They also said that Sheikhs, Syeds, Moguls, and Pathans have four sub-divisions each, and there was no reason why these sub-divisions should not be entered in the fifth column. This contention seems to be correct.

HITAKARI,
Feb. 11th, 1891.

54. The *Hitakari*, of the 11th February, says that the Viceroy's declaration that Government is not opposed to the Congress is a thing of great value. Let the Congress

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

The Census in the Culna sub-division of the Burdwan district.

Government and the Congress.

Committee now burn all those publications of the Congress which are considered objectionable by Government.

55. The *Urdu Guide*, of the 13th February, says that the play of Joseph and Potiphar's wife as enacted at the Parsee theatre is painful to Mussulman feeling, varying as it does from the version of the story given in the Koran.

URDU GUIDE,
Feb. 13th, 1891.

An objectionable play at the Parsee theatre.

56. The *Grāmvasī*, of the 16th February, says that cholera has broken out at Uluberia, in the district of Howrah, in consequence of the large concourse of pilgrims on the occasion of the bathing festival. The local hospital has not accommodation for all the patients. It has only one compounder and one mehter attached to it. The mehter is not a whole-time servant, and the compounder is overworked. The authorities should make special hospital arrangements for this occasion.

GRAMVASI,
Feb. 16th, 1891.

Cholera at Uluberia in the Howrah district.

57. The *Dainik-o-Samāchār Chandrikā*, of the 17th February, refers to Maharaja Sir Jotindro Mohan Tagore's gift of Rs. 5,000 in aid of the Calcutta Female Hospital, and observes as follows:—

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
Feb. 17th, 1891.

Including the Maharaja of Bettiah's gift of Rs. 5,000, the subscriptions in aid of the hospital now amount to Rs. 10,000. If another Rs. 10,000 is subscribed by native gentlemen, some European gentlemen will subscribe Rs. 15,000 or Rs. 25,000. The editors of Anglo-Indian newspapers are very angry because every one of the wealthy natives of Bengal has not come forward with subscriptions in aid of the Lady Dufferin Fund for the supply of female medical aid to the women of this country; and they are, therefore, calling Bengalis cruel, treacherous, hard-hearted, and murderers of women. They apparently think that the virtue of protecting woman is a monopoly of the British nation. But Mr. Cotton, at any rate, must admit that the Hindus alone know how to respect the sex, for his master, Auguste Comte, was clearly of that opinion. It is owing to the Lady Dufferin Fund that the number of European female doctors in this country is increasing. These lady doctors possess a very meagre knowledge of medical science, and they cannot therefore be trusted with serious or difficult cases. People do not now place the same confidence in European male doctors which they did some time ago, and they cannot therefore be expected to have much faith in European lady doctors. But all this notwithstanding, the Fund has attracted a large amount of the country's money, and the Anglo-Indian editors should, instead of abusing the people on the score of niggardliness, thank them for their liberality in this matter.

58. The *Bengal Exchange Gazette*, of the 19th February, says that, though many native gentlemen have given donations in aid of the District Charitable Society's Fund, yet at the Alms House established by the Society, food and clothing are given only to the European poor. Similarly, though native gentlemen are subscribing liberally to the Lady Dufferin Fund, yet at the hospitals founded with their money poor European and Eurasian ladies alone will be treated, and there is very little hope that poor native ladies will derive any benefit from those institutions.

BENGAL EXCHANGE
GAZETTE,
Feb. 19th, 1891.

The Lady Dufferin hospitals.

URIYA PAPERS.

59. The *Uriya and Navasamvād*, of the 28th January, remarks that the Police Commission, instead of taking evidence in Calcutta, should have proceeded to the interior of the province and collected statistics by local enquiries.

URIYA AND
NAVASAMVAD,
Jan. 28th, 1891.

60. The *Utkaldīpikā*, of the 31st January, is of the same opinion. It alludes to the quarrel that took place between Mr. Beames and Raja Peary Mohan Mukherji, and observes that this incident deterred other witnesses from presenting themselves before the Commission.

UTKALDIPIKA,
Jan. 31st, 1891.

61. The Age of Consent Bill has engaged the attention of the native papers of Orissa during the past two weeks. The *Uriya and Navasamvād* is strongly opposed to the measure. The *Samvādvāhikā* and *Utkaldīpikā* write in favour of the Bill. They also make notes of meetings held at Cuttack and Balasore to oppose and support the measure.

ORIYA AND
NAVASAMVAD,

The Age of Consent Bill.

ASSAM PAPERS.

SRIHATTA MIHIR,
Feb. 9th, 1891.

62. The *Srihatta Mihir*, of the 9th February, says that the questions in English set at the last Entrance Examination were of a new and unusual kind. They were, in fact, such as the Vice-Chancellor in his last Convocation speech said such questions should be. But as the candidates had no idea of the nature of the questions they would have to answer, most of them have probably failed to answer them and will therefore be plucked. The teachers of schools should have been given previous intimation of the nature of the questions that had been set, in order to enable them to change their style of teaching accordingly.

PARIDARSHAK,
Feb. 9th, 1891.

63. The *Paridarshak*, of the 9th February, says that, as people never make default in the payment of revenue where they can help it, Government ought to show some leniency to defaulting owners. In its present condition, Sylhet can in a manner claim such leniency as a matter of right. But Mr. Kennedy, the Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet, absolutely refused this year, in contravention of the former practice, to accept revenue on the sale day on account of the defaulting estates of North Sylhet. The number of defaulting estates was so large that the sale continued for four days; and the sale comprised even many homesteads. The estates were sold at such low prices that some Government officers are reported to have made between themselves a *benamee* purchase of a very large mehal by the payment of Rs. 13,700. It is difficult to understand why Mr. Kennedy took all that trouble, and the trouble occasioned by appeals against the sales, when it was in his power to avoid it by accepting revenue on the sale day. His sale has been extremely oppressive. It is hoped that the Chief Commissioner will consider this when appeals shall be heard.

Under existing arrangements, it is very difficult for the owners, whose estates have been sold, to obtain the balance of the sale proceeds. Co-sharers, whose names have not been registered, refuse to receive the money, and where disputes, however small, exist, Government requires owners to have them settled in a civil court before making payment. But it often takes four or five years to have such disputes settled in a civil court, and the rule in Assam is that all balance sale proceeds shall be forfeited to Government if not drawn within three years. Again, the expense and trouble involved in drawing such balance money is so great that many willingly forego small amounts. Many such amounts in the Sylhet collectorate have lapsed to Government.

The present prosperity of Sylhet is due to the minute division of the land in the district, which gives almost every man a piece of land upon whose income he can live. Government should not, for the sake of facilitating the realisation of its revenue, interfere with this source of the prosperity of Sylhet.

Though Government now readily allows owners in Sylhet to register their names, it still raises difficulties in the way of the opening of separate accounts. The smallest disputes are referred to the civil courts for decision. The cost (in the shape of fees and office expenses) and the trouble involved in the registration of names and the opening of separate shares are so great as to deter many from even thinking of these things. Government should, therefore, first of all exempt co-sharers from responsibility for other shares by facilitating the opening of separate accounts. When it has done this, it can make the rules for the realisation of its revenue as stringent as it likes.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,

Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,
The 21st February 1891.